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THE HISTORICAL PRECONDITIONS OF THE FORMATIONS OF CAPITALISM IN JAPAN

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I Problems

(1) The Main subjects of the studies in the Shogunal Regime (*Bakuhan Taisei*) have changed, with the epoch-making "Taikō Land Survey Controversy" as a turning point, from the problems of the Later Shogunal Regime preceding the modern Japan, especially the development of the various anti-feudal factors (the peasant revolts, the commercial economy and the class-differentiation among the peasantry, the landownership, the manufactures, etc.) to the Shogunal Regime itself as a specific social frame-work. Though this means some progress of study, it cannot be said, being restricted to the formative period of the Shogunal Regime and lacking the view-point to see the Regime in its totality as a complex of specific social contradictions, to be sufficiently effective in throwing any light to the declining process of the Regime and the *Meiji* Revolution. We must stand on the view-point which enable us to get knowlege of how had Shogunal Regime to collapse in the course of development of the antagonistic factors which the Regime inevitably embodied from the outset.

(2) It is necessary from us to make clear the social contradictions peculiar to the Shogunal Regime and to see the *Meiji* Revolution in relation to them in order to have a thorough knowlege on the characteristics of the Revolution. More particularly, it is right to think that the structural contradictions of the Shogunal Regime are to be disclosed to the bone and what is thought to be the contradictions of the Regime will come to light one by one in the histrical course before and after the *Meiji* Revolution.

In this respect, identification has already been made mainly by the historians of the political history of the Revolution. For example, Mr. Kiyoshi Haraguchi explains in the conclusion of his book *The Boshin War* (1963) the reason why the *Boshin* War could be determined shortly and Japan could escape from being disrupted and colonized, saying "as a premise for a quickly sight of absolutism, different from the European absolutisms in past, soon after the out-break of the war in Japan, the characteristics of the Shogunal Regime especially its concentration of political power and economy should be investigated." (ibid., pp. 265-266.) The Shogunal Regime, however, was denied in its frame-work by the *Meiji* Revolution, and its characteristics

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(e.g. the concentration of political power and economy) could not be preconditions of *Meiji* Regime until they were negatively intermediated by the historical process before and after the Revolution.

In general, the approach to the problem from the political history of the Revolution, as the things now stand, is nothing but identification or proposal of a problem, and any substantial investigation might well be said to be remained as a matter of further discussion.

(3) In the studies of the anti-feudal factors also, these factors has not yet been acknowledged as that which inevitably comes into being in the developing process of the contradictions of the Shogunal Regime, makes the contradictions more and more serious, and creates the conditions degrading the Regime. In spite of much results has been accumulated in this field since the pre-war through "the Japanese Capitalism controversy", "the Manufacture Controversy", "the parasitic Landownership Controversy", etc., the recent researches rather stagnate.

We must locate anti-feudal factors inside the whole structure of the Shogunal Regime in order to establish the method to acquire the inevitability of the decline of the Regime.

(4) The Opening of Ports of Japan at the end of Shogunal Period tied the country into the network of the World Capitalism. This of course had a major impact upon modernization of Japan, and the importance has of late been recognized by the historians with interesting developments in the study.

In order to clarify the process of changes that took place in the politics and economy of Japan as a result of the pressure of international capitalism, it is necessary to consider the preceding phase of political and economic development in Japan, i.e., prior to her Opening of Ports.

The level and scope of current studies in general makes it impossible to give any consistent explanation on all of the abovementioned phenomena. Although a number of positive and individual researches were made on the subjects, it has only contributed to complicate understanding and to make a total historical comprehension more difficult. The present thesis is but one of the many attempts to clarify a big question, that is, to understand how Japan evolved from the Shogunal Regime (the later feudalism) into a capitalistic country.

II Structural Characteristics of the Shogunal Regime

The Wars in the later middle ages—the disruptions and struggles among of the seigneurial class were caused fundamentally in the progress of formation of the peasant farming which made it impossible to maintain the old-fashioned medieval rule. The later feudalism originated by instituting new seigneurial rule in lieu of the old rule in order to sublate the breakdown of the seigneurial class to maintain the feudalism. It conducted the land survey and the separation of *Samurai* from land (*Heinō-Bunri*) on

a nation-wide scale and organized the whole feudal lords into hierarchy grounded upon the *Kokudaka* (石高) system in order to place the new peasant farming into its own direct domain to exploit all the surplus labor.

In the event, it should be noted that the *Kokudaka* system, a principle of organizing the feudal landownership on a nation-unified scale comes from the medieval Guardianship (*Shugoken*) which originally was existing as an executive of extra-economic coercion of the former feudal state to reenforce the domination of each manor by means of the state authority. It is considered to be attributable to this characteristic of *Kokudaka* system that the feudal landownership was to be unified on a nation-wide scale, that the *Kokudaka* system was not only a principle to organize the unified feudal landownership, but also a higher principle to form the state authority, therefore, each feudal lord (*Daimyō*) was both an individual feudal seignior and the one empowered to take a part of the state power, and that the *Tennō* system, though turning to a nominal one, was incorporated as a part of the later feudalism.

But, neither the Guardianship (*Shugoken*) nor the *Kandaka* (貫高) system of the feudal lord in the Warring Period (*Sengoku-Daimyō*) who had swiftly concentrated the lordships by availing the Guardianship were the system of direct exploitation from destine direct to aim at the peasant farmings. In instituting the *Kokudaka* system as such, intervention by two factors was indispensable, one being the breaking down of the manor system, and the other being the separation *Samurai* from land (a denial of *de facto* landownerships held by the local influential persons who have been raising head by degenerating the manor system from inside). That is to say, the *Kokudaka* system was instituted not on the same line of the Guardianship and the *Kandaka* system, but through drawing the *de facto* small feudal lord apart from his domain located in the rural area, and enrolling him into the vassal group so as to organize a unified feudal landownership, and to establish a new body politics—a new system of the extra-economic coercion and concentrated military force.

In the case of each feudal lord (*Daimyō*), as a prerequisite for him to become the later feudal lord, whether he comes from the vassal group of the *Toyotomis* or the *Tokugawas*, or the subjected former feudal lord in the Warring Period to the *Toyotomis* or the *Tokugawas* as a central power, he had to deny the local rule of the *de facto* small feudal lords, to compose the group of vassals separated from their each domain, and to institute the system of exploiting all the surplus labor from peasantry by dint of the centralized military force and the status system. Even the distinguished feudal lords in the Warring Period such as the *Moris*, the *Uesugis* and the *Satakes* could not success to do it respectively before their surrendering and depending the Shogunate (*Bakufu*). Each seigniorial rule of *Daimyō*—the control of vassal group, the unified sway over peasantry and the construction of the castle town as well as the territorial economy with center in such town—was in progress side by side with the formation of the national feudal landownership under the support of the Shogunate. The Shogunate domination and check over the *Daimyō* such as the heavy military service

and forced transfer of domain (*Tenpū*), the periodical attendance at the Shogunate Court in *Edo* (*Sankin*), etc. themselves gave an influential impetus to the establishment of the seigniorial rule system.

On the one hand, however, the feudal lord, who could establish his own seigniorial rule by finding his position in the organization of unified feudal landownership, failed to rule independently over his own seigniority under the influence of constant controls and restrictions by the Shogunate such as the periodical attendance as a transformation of the military service (*Sankin-Kōtai*), the vicarious execution of public works (*Otetsudai*), monetary service (*Goyōkin*) or strict observance of bans for *Daimyō* (*Bukeshohatto*), the domain transference (*Tenpū*), the forced extinction of *Daimyō* family (*Toritsubushi*). Also, he was unable to expand his own domain by subjugating over or uniting with other lords. Accordingly, it was extremely difficult for the feudal lord to change into an absolute monarch of territorial state with the development of commercial economy and productivity. After all, the principle of organizing the unified feudal landownership was the conditions of both establishing the seigniorial rule system and restricting the transformation of *Daimyō* power into absolutism of territorial state.

What is the case of the Shogunate (*Bakufu*)? So far as the Shogunate is the biggest one of the feudal lords, it was fundamentally same as the case of other feudal lords. As far as the Shogunate occupies the position of mainstay of the unified feudal landownership, its character as the ruler materializing the unification thereof was to be made merely on the assumption of actual existence of each feudal lord as mentioned above. The organization of the feudal landownership with appearance of close unification and centralization was to be established on the premise that each feudal lord possessed the landownership separately and dispersedly, and on the condition that such individually dispersed feudal landownership itself could not realize the exploitation of all the surplus labor from the peasantry without the unified organization. Accordingly, nor the Shogunate as the mainstay of that unified organization of the feudal landownership had any element to turn into the absolutism in a nationwide scale. The principle of organizing the unified feudal landownership was fatal to disclose its contradictions, and to be weakened and broken up in the progress of history.

Let's cast a glance to the circulation of commodities under the control of the unified feudal landownership from the above-mentioned points of view. The circulation of commodities in this age was made on a national scale from the outset with the rice paid as land tax as the main commodity on the ground of that unified organization of landownership. Its center is located in the three big cities (i.e. *Kyoto*, *Ōsaka* and *Edo*). It was not a result of the gradual enlargement and integration of territorial economies of individual feudal lords. The feudal lord authority organized the relations of social division of trades within its own domain revolving around the rice as main commodity, and constructed a castle town as the center, but its economy was exclusively workable on the precondition of a national commercial economy controlled

by the unified feudal land organization. The circulation of commodities in each lord's economy existed only as a part of that national circulation of commodities. Under the circumstance, the organization of unified feudal landownership, which made each *Daimyō's* seigniorial rule possible, and the national unified circulation of commodities, at once, prevented him from independent rule, causing his finance to be destitute.

The Shogunal Regime is the aftermass of overcoming the crists encountered by the class of lords in the disruptions and struggles among them, fundamentally attributable to the gradual formation of peasant farming and the serious anti-feudal peasant risings in the later middle ages. It is the national unified hierarchy of the feudal landownership incorporating individual lordship to sublate the antagonisms and struggles among them and the concentrated powerfull military force as a instrument of extra-economic coercion built up by consolidating each lord's military power into the national unified one against all the peasantry. The *Kokudaka* system of the Shogunal Regime was not instituted not by concentrating the individual lordships (as was the case of the absolutism) but by making them as a premise, and the hierarchy of the feudal landownership involved inevitably the split between the tendencies of unification and dispersion, between the standpoints of lordship as a whole and as a individual.

The circulation of commodities based on the feudal landownership had no center except the three big cities, and no other national route of commerce. This facts meant that the feudal landownership covered such big cities, which were no municipal corporation, and where even the most privileged merchants were mere dependants so far as their personal identification were concerned. It was an indispensable condition for the Shogunal Regime to establish itself on a nation wide scale.

While the separation of *Samurai* from land and disarmament of farming class (*Katanagari*) made the lordship as a whole possible to exploit all the surplus labor, it meant that the peasantry had become the exclusive subject of actual productions and the lords had been separated from them decisively.

The increase in productivity of the peasant farming, a basically antagonistic factor against the lordship in the later feudalism, especially formation and development of the peasant commodity production confronted with the difficulty to a great extent, because the peasantry had to be racked the land tax in rice, their main products. On the other hand, the feudal lord's commercial economy on a national scale with the rice as the main commodity could not help giving certain impetus upon the peasant commodity production throughout the country (chiefly the production of field crops other than rice). Therefore, the peasant commodity production under the Shogunal Regime was set up and developed as the production of commodities for the remote market dealed exclusively by the hands of the three big cities' merchants, and thus, for the time being, it had a phase to maintain the strong coherence with the national seigniorial commodity economy. These production and circulation of peasant commodities being developed on a national scale from the outset promoted the improve-

ment of the agricultural productivity throughout the country and gradually created the conditions of setting up a domestic market. While, as it was placed under the powerful influence of the feudal lord's commercial economy, with its pricing decided chiefly by the initiatives of the three big cities' merchants, it gave the Shogunate or feudal lords to enforce the exploitation and control, and the commission merchants to form the monopoly, by which the new accumulation of surplus in the hands of peasantry was to be in difficulties.

III Collapse of the Shogunal Regime

The basic factors which have driven the Shogunal Regime into collapse are the improvement of productivity in the peasant farming as well as the development of the peasant commodity production. From the viewpoint of the formation of a domestic market, it can be seen in the enlargement and intensification of the social division of labor among the peasantry, the turnover of peasants into the petite commodity-producers, and the extension of class-differentiation among them. New social division of labor leading the Shogunal Regime to collapse advanced in rural area but not in such cities and towns as the three big cities of *Edo*, *Ōsaka*, *Kyoto*, the Castle Town, etc. which were the mainstays of the Shogunal Regime. It is the rural industry that gave impetus thereto.

The rural industry dates back to the latter half of the 18th century. It began to develop in the area where dense communication could be maintained with the central markets in the three big cities respectively (e.g. districts along the *Seto* Inland Sea coast linking with *Ōsaka*). Entering the 19th century, a nation wide division of labor between the commercial agricultures and the rural processing industries was made (e.g. the coming into being of the cotton industry districts such as *Hokuriku*, *Kita-Kyushu*, *Akita* and others to which a great deal of raw materials were transferred). In the advanced part of the country, we can see the formation of the rural processing industry area, the class differentiation among the small trades, the keeping of small trades under the subjection of the local merchants risen from the small trademen, the wide-spread development of the capitalist domestic labors, moreover the introduction of the division of labor into the latter (so-called the scattered manufacture), and the turning up of the manufactures from the small trades. Taking the cotton industry, an index of rural industries, as an example in this connection, before the Opening of Ports the advanced textile districts (*Izumi*, *Yamato*, *Owari*, *Musashi* and *Shimotsuke*) had the separated processes of cotton crops-spinning-weaving organized in the meshes of the net of social division of labor each other, and in the pivotal division of weaving, the manufactures and the capitalist domestic labors are considered to have shared the dominant part of the output.

Such development of rural industry caused a gradual change of the circulation of commodity under the Shogunal Regime. In these circumstances, *Ōsaka* and *Edo* begins

to change their parts from the feudal lords' central market to the central market of a nation's domestic market.

Two or three indexes will be quoted for the illustration as follows: Firstly so far as the commodities dealt in *Ōsaka* and *Edo* markets are concerned, the rice, the feudal lord's main commodity, gradually decreased in both amount and rate. For instance, whereas the rice paid as land tax (*Kuramai*) in the *Ōsaka* market occupied 1,170,000 *Koku* (5,603,200 bushels) and 35.8 % of the whole amount of commodities in 1714 (4 *Shōtoku*), estimation is made of about 1,500,000 *Koku* (7,440,000 bushels) and 15 % respectively at the beginning of the 19th century (*Bunka* era), with the following two items taken into consideration.

(1) During that period the products of the commercial agricultures and the rural industries increased rapidly. Though a part of them occupied by the monopoly of the Clan (*Han*), majority was the peasants' commodities.

(2) It is attributable to the considerable decrease in the price of rice as compared with those of other commodities. Moreover, it should be taken into account that the decrease in the amount of rice paid as land tax, the increase in the productivity of rice crops, and the alleviation of price control on the part of the Shogunate and the Clan (*Han*) resulted in the change of the commodity circulation network.

Secondly the sharp increase in the amount of the commodities collected to *Ōsaka* and *Edo* shows a fact that the lots delivered to the consuming districts in the whole country from *Ōsaka* and *Edo* increased more rapidly than the lots consumed in *Ōsaka* and *Edo*. In the case of white cotton cloth, for example, whereas the volume of lots collected to *Ōsaka* (by the commission merchants) was 2,060,000 *Tan* in 1714, the corresponding figure at the outset of the 19th century shows 8 million *Tan*, and the population of *Ōsaka* was almost constantly 380,000 or so for these years.

Thirdly, the power of the big three cities' merchants to control the commodity circulation network and to manipulate the market prices began to lower in the middle 18th century, and more and more lowered especially in the 19th century. The development of the peasant commodity production made the commission merchants inefficient to control by advance over the peasant producers, the decrease of the loan to the feudal lords and the forcing contribution policy of the Shogunate resulted in the reduction of the merchants' financial capacity, and thus their monopoly over the commodity circulation were obliged to retreat. Also, it brought about a cutthroat competition and disruption among the chartered guild merchants (*Kabunakama*) and an appearance of the outsiders within the three big cities. The 8 million *Tan* of the white cotton clothes collected in a year to *Ōsaka* at the outset of the 19th century as quoted above were the cargos booked through the hands of the chartered commission merchants, on the contrary, however, the figure corresponding thereto for the year of 1840 (11 *Tenpo*) shows a decrease to nothing but 3 million *Tan*. The meshes of commodity circulation network covering whole the country became more and more elaborate filled with bypaths, and with the development of new national commercial

traffic with many bypaths avoiding *Ōsaka*, the commodities passing through the back of the chartered commission merchants increased even in case they pass by way of *Ōsaka*.

Such state of affairs shows a fact that the production and circulation of commodities are becoming free from the regulations based on the necessities of the feudal landownership and the traffic monopoly of the privileged merchants. And the competition for the commodity production among the different districts and the individual producers becomes more and more full-scale according to the degree of freedom of trade thus gained. A sight of variation in the producing districts of the booked cargos of white cotton clothes in *Ōsaka* will tell us the story. In 1786 (6 *Tenmei*), *Ōsaka* collected 2.85 million *Tan*, of which 2 million *Tan* came from *Sanyō*, but of 11.8 million *Tan* in 1882 (15 *Meiji*), 4.5 million *Tan* from *Izumi*, 4.65 million *Tan* from *Yamato*, an overwhelming volume respectively, followed by 0.6 million *Tan* from *Kii*, 0.51 million *Tan* from *Kawachi*, and 1.03 million *Tan* from *Sanyō* of which 0.49 million *Tan* from *Aki* of which share had been 0.1 million *Tan* in 1786. After the end of the 18th century, the most rapidly advanced weaving districts *Izumi* and *Yamato* overwhelmed the *Ōsaka* market.

Those changes advanced rapidly for the years from the Opening of Ports to the beginnings of *Meiji* era, but we can trace their origin to the end of the 18th century substantially the *Kasei* era. For example, it is told that *Izumi* saw an increase of cotton cloth production from 1 million *Tan* to 4 million *Tan* during the period covering 1810-1861. Further, the above-mentioned white cotton cloth cargos in *Ōsaka* in 1786 was collected by the commission merchants mainly within the western districts (*Saigoku*), therefore the actual quantity of collection including that of *Kinai* districts was substantially great. In any case, the change of the districts producing the white cotton cloth dealt with in *Ōsaka* market is obvious. As for the *Edo* market we can tell the same story.

The cotton clothes of the certain districts which had been excluded from the central markets became to find the new markets such as *Kyushu*, *Hokuriku* and *Tōhoku*, and the delivery of the commodities from the central markets also were increasing, thus the competitive relations spread all over the country with incorporating the underdeveloped areas into a nation wide markets.

This is a story as to the process of formation of the domestic market in Japan, but from the historical and substantial points of view, it is not so simple as mentioned above.

Originally, under the Shogunal Regime, the feudal lords' commodity circulation had been established on national scale, and an embryo of the peasant commodity production were also existing in the interior of the former. From the end of the 17th century, side by side with the existing commercial network on the ground of the unified feudal landownership, a new commodity circulation based on certain surplus in the hands of peasantry emerged, but yet it resulted in the establishment of the

system commercial monopoly by the three big cities' merchants on the division of urban and rural functions, the former being a mainstay of the Shogunal Regime. And also the division of labor inside the rural society in general could not develop so much as to degenerate the feudal landownership, and most of which was limited to a small area. After the second half of the 18th century too, the feudal lords' commodity economy and commercial control, appression and restriction of the peasant commodity production, and the commercial domination of the commission merchants in the three big cities were still effective completely, though these were going on the way to weaken in the long run. These different kinds of circulations of commodities intertwining in opposition or in close connection mutually, on the whole, intensified the national commercial link and changed the latter quality.

As for the underdeveloped area, the rice crop districts along the coast of Japan Sea came into being in connection with the afore-mentioned process after the end of the 18th century. There we can see the general spread of the peasants' sale of rice and purchase of manure and clothing articles, the improvement of rice crop productivity, the class differentiation among the peasantry, the appearance of parasitic landowner and peasants' work outside the home locality, the permission of the parasitic landowner system by *Han* authority and the reorganization of ruling system. In these districts, although the feudal landownership somewhat decreased and the agricultural productivity were gradually improved, yet, under the surging waves of commodity economy by the rapid development of the advanced area, the feudal lordship and the parasitic landownership co-operated in close connection to reenforce the feudal rule, and a great number of peasants degraded into the rack-rented subtenants or cottiers and became to go to work outside their home localities. Such miserable sight was more apparent in the underdeveloped villages of *Kanto* and *Tōhoku* districts, and some of those villages were brought to be utterly devastated. The land tax was raised to cover the lord's financial deficiency. Under the influence of economic growth in advanced area, the peasantry were obliged to commercialize their daily lives without a sufficient improvement of productivity to commercialize their production. They were enforced to sell their products by distress. Under these circumstances, there developed in rural society the usury-capital independently from the actual production, on the one hand, the parasitic landowners holding the mortgage on profitable lands concentrated the low-tax lands by usury, most peasants were distressed under the heavy land tax and high interest, the rural population was decreased, and the devastation of cultivated land, the frequent occurrence of famine, the vagrancy of peasants and their fall into the quasi-proletariat were proceeding. As a result, the absolute decrease lord's revenue from the land tax was inevitable. After all, the underdeveloped rural society in *Kanto* and *Tōhoku* districts was the converging point of the contradictions both of the Shogunal Regime and of certain bourgeois development in the interior of the former.

In the advanced areas the growth of the commodity production brought about

the differentiation of peasants into the rich and the poor, and the formation of a certain class of the early proletariat. Particularly, in the districts of developed rural industries, we can see the completely separated wage earners, industrial specialists and commercial capital from agriculture and the trade-towns as the centers of rural industries. However, the agricultural productivity even in the advanced areas remained too weak to reform the small farming mode of production. Thus, in the course of the differentiation among the peasantry, the well-to-do farmers tended to become the landowners, but the degeneration of the landowner or the rich farmer through curtailing his own farming lands to let them into a complete parasitic landowner could hardly been seen generally yet (such tendency would have been popular in the process of the so-called primitive accumulation of capital after the Opening of Ports, especially during the early years of *Meiji*).

Here we may refer to certain characteristics of the petite commodity production in agriculture in Japan.

The fundamental method of fertility maintenance in agriculture under feudalism is to maintain the fertility of the peasants' holdings by utilizing the nutritious elements of grasses of the commons—meadow, pasture, waste and forest. One example of this method is the mow-and-lay grass (*Karishiki*) system in Japan, and an other is the three fields system in Europe. The essential difference of these systems lies in the medium between the land to be fertilized and the grass, *i.e.* whether it is the bare hands of man or the digestive organ of livestock. The petite commodity production in agriculture can be established when the productivity is improved by the certain new fertilization in addition to the making most of the commons. Fundamentally, it was in Japan to introduce the commercial fertilizer and its heavy use, while in Europe to introduce the grass growing into the fallow. In each case, it was possible to increase productivity and to release the farming from depending on the village community to some extent by so doing. But these methods were insufficient to break down the community overall and to realize the productivity to reform the petite mode of production. It would be noteworthy to point out that in Europe the grass-growing in fallow made the farming possible to reinforce the fertility within itself and to strengthen its independency, whereas in Japan, though the dependence of the farming upon the commodity was diminished by the use of commercial fertilizer, it was introduced from the outside, therefore the subordination of the farming to the commercial capital not only in the sale of its products but also in the purchase of production means (manure). And also, while the grass-growing (ley-farming) led in time to the appearance of the small enclosures and to the partial denial of the open field system and the communal restrictions upon cultivation, the use of commercial fertilizer, though it brought somewhat to diminish the community's function, yet had never inevitability of abolishing the community. Such characteristics of the productivity of petite commodity production in agriculture in Japan seems to have been prescribed by the characteristics of the *Karishiki* farming as well as of the Shogunal

Regime.

Also, the undertakings of developing the new paddy-fields under the Shogunal Regime gave the peasants farmings impetus to introduce commercial fertilizer as a result of decrease in the grass sources, and the so-called primitive accumulation by the *Meiji* government, especially the incorporation of forests and wastes into the state lands induced them to depend on commercial fertilizer more and more. Therefore, though the development of petite commodity production in agriculture gave rise to the increase of agricultural productivity and the aggravation of the discrepancy with the feudal landownership, yet it intensified the adhesion of the commercial-usury capital to the peasantry and the conditions on which the commercial-usury capitalists or the parasitic landowners who had turned from the former could usurp the fruits of the increase in productivity.

Such development of the peasant commodity production as mentioned above will cause to destroy the foundations of the Shogunal Regime, to turn its contradictions serious and to break up the seigniorial rule.

The circulation monopoly of the privileged urban commission merchants begin to unsettle after the middle of the 18th century. The urban commission merchants, who originally came to the fore at the end of 17th century, made the peasant commodity productions, to be a source of profit, and ruled them by payment in advance. And also they monopolized the commodity circulation process by means of the engrossing of transportation, the command over the urban manufacturing industries and the incorporation of a sort of guild. They, transmuting the Shogunal Regime to some extent, became a constituent thereof through the official recognition of guild (*Kabunakama*), further, they made the feudal landownership to be another source of profit by money-lending to the lords whose economy grounded on the sale of tax rice. Therefore, they had two sources of profit, one being the peasants' surplus and the other the land tax, and their character had such a phase as discrepant with the feudal landownership. Also, the circulation monopoly in a national-wide scale by commission merchants in the three big cities was always conflicting with the individual *Daimyo's* rule over his domain economy, and made him difficult to exercise the rule independently. Such discrepancy will be not actualized so far as the unifiedly organized feudal landownership is strong enough to guarantee the sufficient profits to the commission merchants and the grant of privileges by the *Shogun* and the *Daimyos* is effective to usurp the fruits of peasant commodity production. But such development of the commercial economy among the peasantry as mentioned above gradually eliminate these conditions, since the end of the 18th century, especially after the period of *Bunka-Bunsei* (1804-29), the contradictions come out in sight. The dissolution of the chartered guilds (*Kabunakama*) in the *Tempo* Reform is the consequence thereof.

The land tax revenue of the feudal landownership began to stagnate or decrease from about the middle of the 18th century. The feudal lords faced with great financial

difficulties, the cancellation of the *Han*'s debts was enforced in the course of the *Han* political reform (*Hanseikaikaku*). Even if it was not done, the financial the rate of difficulties of lords made the bad debts to increase, besides the rate of interest on the lord's loan was decreasing. And it resulted in the shortening of the exchange brokers' funds, which were a stay of the commission merchants' monopoly of circulation. Retrogression of the feudal landownership develops discrepancy between the feudal lords and the commission merchants. The feudal lords reinforce the *Han Monopoly* from the latter half of the 18th century to overcome the stagnation or decrease of the land tax revenues. Most of them are the attempt of the *Han* to combine with the commission merchants within own domain in order to out off the overwhelming influence of the commission merchants in the three big cities, to engross the circulation of commodities inside the domain, to sell the products' under the regulation by the *Han* to everywhere in the country including the three big cities for the purpose to absorb the sales profits. They had to content with the interests of the producers (peasantry) and of the local merchants inside the domain, and those of the commission merchants in the three big cities as well as of the Shogunate and other Clan (*Han*) authorities. Accordingly, at a time when the domain economy tends to have close ties with the national economy, the *Han Monopoly*, supported by the extra-economic coercion based on the *Han* feudal landownership, lacks successful conditions, and in fact, in most cases, the *Han* monopolies did not last long, suffering the attacks from both inside and outside the domain.

Such a position of the Shogunate as materializing the principle of the feudal unification are considerably degrading, the Shogunate intends to maintain and reinforce itself as the supreme lord. However, it means that the disruption of the dual functions of the Shogunate is disclosed and the Shogunate itself destroys the feudal unification. Referring to the Shogunal attempt to reinforce the control over the areas of *Kinai* and *Kanto*, for example, on account of the Shogunate's bilateral nature, it could not help always delaying to meet the progress of events and making failure by suffering the counterattack of the local merchants and the peasants as was seen in the petitioning movement on a province-wide scale (*Kuniso*). Also, this policy usually comes into antagonisms with the *Daimyōs* (most of them are those in hereditary vassalage to the *Shogun*) and the direct feudatories of the *Shogun* (*Hatamoto*) within *Kinai* and *Kanto*, and results in the isolation of the *Shogun*. An ordinance to let the lords pay a part of their land-tax revenues to the Shogunate (the *Agechirei*) in the *Tenpo* Reform, an immediate cause of failure in the Reform, resulted in further effete of the Shogunal Authority.

Thus the *Tenpo* Period (1830-44), during which progress was made in the formation of the domestic market with impetus given by the rural industries from the economic points of view, which satisfied the basic economic conditions of racial unification, is indeed appreciated as the time when the feudal unification turned decisively into dissolution and dislocation for that very reason.

The Shogunal Regime intended to organize the unified feudal landownership on a nation-wide scale, to work out the system to rule the peasantry based thereon, and to stabilize and maintain the rule by the Closing of Ports (*Sakoku*), but the subsequent development of the contradictions immanent in the Shogunal Regime impeded or either the feudal lords to turn into the absolute monarch of the territorial state the Shogunate to establish the absolutism throughout the land, and the feudal crisis turned to a serious stage.

IV Japan's Compulsory Incorporation into the World Structure of Capitalism at the Moment of the Opening of Ports

Japan's incorporation into the world structure of capitalism by the Opening of Ports at such stage of the feudal crises as mentioned above was the decisive moment to drive the Shogunal Regime to collapse.

Already the Shogunate could not determine the attitude toward the foreign impact independently. This shows a fact that the Shogunate itself recognize own inability to play the part embodying the principle of unification of the feudal landownership. It goes beyond such state of affairs and intensifies the political antagonism around the Shogunate government, and the Shogunate signature to the *Ansei Treaty* and the Mass Execution of the *Ansei Era* (*Ansei-no-Taigoku*) made the antagonisms more serious.

On the other hand, Japan made rapid strides in the foreign trade. In this country, having already an considerably developed commodity production and circulation, the effect of the free trade under the framework of unequal treaties soon spread all over the country. In particular, it had a rapid and profound effect on some advanced industrial sections in which the commodity production were expanding. Taking cotton products as an example, the popular calico became a major import soon after the Opening of Ports, then the export of a large amount of raw cotton in meeting world-wide famine during the Civil War in America and a great deal of inflow of cotton products after the termination of the War caused the national cotton industry to be destructed and changed promptly. To make the matter worse, as the imported cotton products flowed, first of all, into the three big cities and other towns, it was the greatest blow to the advanced textile districts having so far the overwhelming influence on the markets in the three big cities. Though the rapid expansion of the export of raw silk contributed largely to the development of sericultural centers located in *Tōsandō*, *Kantō* and *Tohoku* districts, it also gave a crushing blow to the silk fabrics industry. Again, the raw silk trade itself was considerably unstable due to the instability of Western markets, the Western traders' disgraceful transaction, trade restriction on the part of the Shogunate, etc. which promoted the disruption of rural sericultural centers. As for another example, rape-seed oil which in 1860, the next to the Opening of Ports, was exported in amount well over the total an-

nually demands in *Edo*, saw a decrease in export to less than one 20th in the subsequent year.

With Japan's forcible incorporation into the world capitalism after entering the latter half of the 19th century at the time when the western capitalist countries with the Britain in the lead had already accomplished their industrial revolutions and were becoming the capitalist powers, together with the internal condition of the Shogunal Regime already in the process of collapse and that of the formation of domestic markets, as we have seen, in progress to a certain extent at that time, the collapse of the Shogunal Regime as well as the destruction and reorganization of the commodity production and circulation was accelerated. In addition, chaos of the national economy were multiplied by a sharp rise in prices owing to the recoinage by the Shogunate.

So far as such internal and international conditions as mentioned above are concerned, the economic influence of the foreign trade might have been much more speedy and profound in Japan than in other Asian countries. Of course, this matter of thing continued to effect on the economy of Japan not only at the end of the Shogunal period but also after the beginning of the *Meiji* era. It consists of an important condition which defines the structural characteristics of capitalism in Japan. It is noted that during the period from the end of the 18th century to the middle of 19th century, in U.S.A. and the European Continental countries excepting Germany before unification, the high-rate protective tariff policy or the import prohibition policy was effective against the productivity of British Capitalism, while Japan was forced to accept the free-trade regardless to the great difference of productivity between she and Western capitalist countries, and as a result of it her economy was usurped by these countries.

Though the foreign pressure on Japan was not only such a economic but also extra-economic one which included the threat and use of military force, the urging of unequal treaties and the attempt to enforce the territorial division, etc., I might say, under such conditions internal and external as we have seen, it was considerably more economic in Japan than in other Asian countries.

Thus the Opening of Ports was the crisis of the feudal lord class, rapid changes of economic relations both inside and outside the country gave a decisive blow to the feudal landownership and an impetus to the antagonism and disruption among the feudal lord class, with their power of economic control turned to be ineffective. As Japan saw the formation of domestic market to a certain extent at that time, it could be accepted as a racial crisis by those classes consisting of the feudal lords, merchants, producers (peasantry craftsmen, small tradesmen, putters-out, manufacturers, etc.) as well. After confronting such dual crisis both of the Shogunal Regime and of the race, for a first time, a substantial political subject called the *Sonjyōha*, a party who advocated the *Tennō* rule in stead of the Shogunate and the exclusion of foreigners, could be established to overcome the Shogunal Regime. The *Sonjyōha* had a

a epochmaking importance in its achievement of the first concentration, extraneous to the feudal unification, of political powers on a nation-wide scale, which could be done by neither the feudal rulers such as Shogunate and other lords, nor merchants and peasantry.

These who constituted the *Sonjyōha* were, in the one hand, the *Samurai* rank and file, who were suffered most bitterly among the ruling class from the results of the contradictions of declining feudal Regime and were conscious seriously to the crisis of the Regime through their distress in consequence of the Opening of Ports, in the other hand, the *Sōmōs*, a class of a sort of gentleman-like farmers and local merchants, who were in economic peril owing to the rapid change and destruction of the commodity production and circulation after the same Opening. The latter joined the political struggles against the Shogunate and the foreign capitalism from the fear of destruction of their petite bourgeois development, therefore they were considerably retrospective and reactionary in their consciousness, subjected to the initiative of the *Samurai* leaders of the *Tōbakuha*, a party who advocated chiefly to overthrow the Shogunate, and were utilized inevitably as the human resources for the military force to attack the Shogunate.

Again, the internal conditions, which made it possible for the overwhelmingly high productivity of Western capitalism to display the destructive power like a heavy gun, for such a short term, against the Japanese economy after the Opening of Ports, were the developments of the dislocation of the old mode of production and the formation of the domestic market to a considerably extent, so the same conditions also made it possible the new mode of production to develop rapidly from the midst of the ruined old. Therefore, at the time when the Shogunate fell down and the political aspect of affairs turned, the development of new economy was in the way to prepare soon the outburst of the Liberal-Democratic-Movement (*Jiyū-Minken-Undō*) as a bourgeois revolutionary struggle.